

# THE CLERICAL AND LAY NETWORK OF THE SHINZEI FAMILY AND THE PRODUCTION OF PAINTINGS DURING THE INSEI PERIOD

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This article represents that first half of a seven-part lecture dealing with role of Fujiwara no Michinori, Shinzei Nyūdō, and his family in the creation of visual arts during the Insei period. The family has never been systematically associated with the production of works of art, but this study documents their involvement with the creation of *emaki*, illustrated handscrolls, and *Mikyō zuzō*, esoteric Buddhist iconography. While seldom linked to the visual arts, several descendants of Shinzei, particularly priests of the Agui school of Tendai Buddhist preachers, have been theorized as having been involved in the creation of the *Heike monogatari*. There is, however, one painting with which the priests of Agui had been associated since Insei times. When they preached at memorial services for members of the imperial family, images of Fugen bosatsu and the Ten Rasetsunyo were frequently painted on behalf of the deceased, at times by their ladies-in-waiting, and occasionally on their personal apparel. This article begins by introducing an unpublished *hyōbyaku*, statement of purpose, by Chōken, the founder of the Agui school, that documents the creation of such imagery by the ladies-in-waiting of Jōzaimon'in for a memorial service on behalf of her mother, Taikenmon'in.

The second section of the article shifts the focus away from the priests of Agui to other branches of the Shinzei Ichimon, the descendants of Shinzei. Analyzing the records of the dedication of the rebuilt Tōdaiji, it demonstrates that several clerical lineages descended from Shinzei occupied important posts at the Tōdai-ji and Kōfuku-ji temples in Nara and at Daigo-ji and its subtemple Muryōju-in, closer to the capital. The section goes on to note that two characteristics common to many of these priests and also to the secular descendants of Shinzei were their prodigious learning, exemplified by their composition of the *kanbun* genres of *hyōbyaku* and *ganmon*, and their intimacy with members of the imperial family.

The third section of the article deals with Michinori/Shinzei himself. It examines his relationships to three of the most prominent figures in the creation and compilation of esoteric iconography during the Insei period, i.e., Jōki-in Shinkaku, the compiler of the *Besson zakki*, ShōjōbōEjū, the compiler of the *Jikkanshō*, and Chinkai Ikō, perhaps the most famed of all Buddhist painters of the period. The link with Shinkaku is traced back to joint participation of the two young men in the creation of the *Kunōjikyō* and a surprising instance of the transmission of esoteric Buddhist knowledge from Shinzei to the scholar-priest. The transmission of such knowledge is also seen in Shinzei's dealings with Ejū. Proof of a relationship with Chinkai is more circumstantial, but one sees in tracing these links that Shinzei had access to knowledge stored in imperial and temple archives that were restricted to all but those with the closest contact with imperial authority. It also becomes clear that he was involved in the creation of catalogs of such sites. Shinzei's sons Shōken at Daigoji, Kakuken at Kōfukuji, and Jōken at the Rengeō-in of Go-Shirakawa'in seem to have likewise participated in cataloging the treasures under their management.

The fourth and final section of the article concentrates on Shinzei's son Kakutō-in Shōken, three times abbot of Daigo-ji and also the head of Tōdai-ji, and his associates. A key to the understanding the place of Shōken in the creation and ordering of esoteric visual knowledge is recognition of his role in the composition of exoteric genres of *hyōbyaku* and *ganmon*, which are usually classified as *shōdō bungaku*, the literature of preaching, with which his brother Chōken is firmly associated. By reconstructing the lost *Shōken hyōbyakushū* and examining other temple documents, this article illuminates the circle of Shōken's associates. Shōken was not only closely associated with the aforementioned Shinkaku, but also with Kakuzen, the compiler of the *Kakuzenshō*, and important esoteric priests

and painters such as Kōzen, Shinkai, Ken'zō, and perhaps most importantly Jinken, who was involved with Shōken's nephew Seigen in the creation of the so-called *Menashikyō*. This section also treats Shōken's long-ignored brother Sadanori, or Shōsai, who is shown to have been deeply involved with Shinkaku, and Shōken's nephew Jōgen, who is demonstrated to have worked with Kakuzen in the compilation of the massive *Kakuzenshō*.

A subsequent article will cover the second half of the original lecture. Part five begins with the *Menashikyō* and addresses the role of the Shinzei Ichimon in the creation of various *emaki*. Special emphasis is placed on related projects with a strong visual component, such as the composition of the ganmon for *Heike nōkyō* by Shinzei's first son, Toshinori, and of Chōken's involvement with the production of illustrations of the *Genji monogatari*, apparently for the poets of the Karin-en circle. The sixth section returns to the iconography of the Fugen and the Ten Rasetsunyo via an examination of iconographic overlap in various paintings, beginning with Jinken's portrait of Seiryō Gongen. The significance of the imagery and its connection with the *Heike monogatari* is traced through links between the Fugen imagery and tales of resurrection from the dead, the composition of waka, and acts of repentance.

## ON THE STANDING JŪICHIMEN KANNON AT GANGŌ-JI TEMPLE

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The standing, wooden Jūichimen Kannon (Sk. Ekādaśamukha) at Gangōji in Nara, which has been designated an Important Cultural Property, is a work that has long been entrusted to the Nara National Museum and often been put on display and made available to the public. Nonetheless, the statue's place in the history of sculpture is uncertain. However, since it displays a consciously archaic style of the early-Heian period, it is thought to be from the mid-Kamakura period. On the basis of x-ray photography conducted in recent years, we have learned about its structure and techniques and the existence of enshrined objects that had previously been unknown.

In terms of knowledge of structural elements and techniques, it has been learned that an unusual technique was used to keep the inlaid crystal eyes in place. Instead of using a wooden pin set against the backboard for the inlaid crystal eyes, a long, flat board (apparently of bamboo) that has been inserted like a prop to secure the eyes in this statue. This method is seen in works of the Buddhist sculptor Zen'en that are found in the Nara area and that are from the early and mid-Kamakura period, suggesting that he may have been the creator.

Three varieties of objects are found in the statue: they are principally composed of a small wooden Jūichimen Kannon and a group of twelve or thirteen scrolls. There is no way to identify the scrolls, but the small Jūichimen Kannon resembles the style of the early works of Zen'en, which is another factor that allows us to surmise the identity of the sculptor.

Some have previously attributed this work to Zen'en, but these factors enhance the probability that such an attribution is correct. Were this work to be placed in the context of the evolution of the style of Zen'en's works, it would be found among the works from the last years of his life.

Although some of the heads in the crown are later replacements, most of the heads are contemporaneous with the body of the statue. Among them are found some with inexplicable expressions not seen elsewhere. It is thought that these may reflect the influence of the images of the Radiant Wisdom Kings Fudō (Acala) and Daiitoku (Yamāntaka). Additionally, one head appears to be a dry-lacquer-with-wood-core type reused from an early-Heian statue. This fact suggests that the charac-

ter of this statue is of a classicist revival of an archaic form.

## ON THE STANDING SHAKA NYORAI STATUE AT KINPUSEN-JI TEMPLE, INCLUDING A REPORT ON ITS CONSERVATION

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This statue is from the Zaōdō (Zaō Hall) at Kinpusen-ji in Yoshino, a temple known as site of mountain ascetic practitioners, *shugenja*. Originally the main worship object of Seson-ji temple in the settlement of Komori, this statue was transferred to the Zaōdō when that temple was abolished in Meiji times. This larger than life-sized statue is a masterpiece of Kamakura-period sculpture, demonstrating the influence of the Song style, but the date of its creation and the identity of the sculptor are unknown. The statue was designated as an important cultural property by Nara prefecture in 2004 and underwent conservation over the next two years. In the course of the conservation, it was discovered that it contained an inscription indicating that it had been repaired in Ōei 32 (1425) and that the interior surface had been painted with ash from bones.

This statue resembles those of Shaka nyorai (the historical Buddha Śākyamuni) at the Ritsu sect temples of Kaikō-ji and Tōfuku-ji in Kyoto. Those statues are also strongly influenced by the Song style. There are, however, points of difference, including the fact that the color of the robe is not red, but yellow and the mudra, hand gesture, varies. Furthermore, when compared with the statue at Kaikō-ji, the style appears to have been domesticated, indicating that it is a later work. The Kaikō-ji statue is thought to have been one of a triad that included Anan (Sk. Ānanda) and Kashō (Sk. Mahākāśapaya). This statue was also part of a set that included Anan and Kashō, but they have been installed in the Kannondō. These attendant figures, nevertheless, vary slightly in style and composition from the Shaka nyorai and are instead closer to the Shōtoku Taishi from the same hall, which is thought to have been created by Buddhist sculptors of the Kei-ha in Bun'ei 11 (1274). Although undoubtedly one of a set of three, there must have been special circumstances that led a second Buddhist sculptor to create the attendant figures.

Song-era Shaka triads with Anan and Kashō as the attendant figures were chiefly adopted by priests from temples in Kyoto and Kamakura that combined the Zen and Ritsu traditions and were seldom seen in Nara. The primary reason behind this statue being found in Yoshino is the expansion of the sphere of influence of the Ritsu sect as is seen in the visit of Eison to the temple in Bun'ei 9 (1272), but the form of this statue differs from that of the many Seiryōji-type Shaka that Eison had created in the Nara region, and instead resembles the style of that at Kaikō-ji in Kyoto. The reasons for this stylistic discrepancy are unclear, but because the Shōtoku Taishi statue contains Buddhist scriptures that were copied near Kiyomizudera in Kyoto, some connection to the Ritsu sect in Kyoto may be discerned. Moreover, since Tendai rites were also conducted at Kinpusen-ji during this period, it seems probable that Tendai priests brought with them the special culture of the Ritsu sect in Kyoto, which combined the Ritsu and Zen traditions, to Kinpusen-ji.

The fact that ash from bones has been painted over the interior surface of the statue was discovered during the conservation process and the result of further investigation revealed that the remains were those of a small animal. The painting of the interior of a Buddhist statue with the ash of animal bones is inexplicable, but it is probably necessary to consider that behind this anomaly was the special environment of a sacred *shugendō* site where various cultural traditions were conflated.